

**Abstract**

An architecture and method is provided that facilitates serialization of a graph of objects into streams of data in an arbitrary format, and deserialization of the streams of data back into the graph of objects. The architecture provides a number of services associated with the basic functionality of serialization and deserialization. The services can be employed to implement transparent remoting, copy items to a clipboard and save data to a file. The present invention provides facilities which support the plugging in of a new serialization encoding by separating the encoding from the reading and  
reinstantiation of the graph of objects which the encoding describes. Objects in a graph of objects are serialized and deserialized based on a selected rule set for that object. A rule set can be provided by a class author within a class or within a third party file referred to as a surrogate.